

1.0 Introduction:

During the 2000 fire season, more than 6.8 million acres of public and private lands burned, resulting in loss of property, damage to resources, and disruption of community services. Many of these fires occurred in wildland/urban interface areas and exceeded fire suppression capabilities.

To reduce the risk of fire in the Wildland/urban inter-face, the President of the United States directed the Secretaries of the Departments of Agriculture and Interior to increase federal investments in projects to reduce the risk of a wildfire in the urban/urban interface. The urban/urban interface occurs where human structures meet or intermix with urban vegetation.

This congressional direction resulted in the preparation of the “National Fire Plan” (NFP) (U.S. Department of Agriculture [USDA] 2002). This plan was approved in September 2000 and is titled *Managing the Impacts of Wildfire on Communities and the Environment: A Report to the President in Response to the Wildfires of 2000*. The objectives of the National Fire Plan include: firefighting preparedness, rehabilitation and restoration of burned areas, reduction of hazardous fuels, community assistance, and accountability.

In 2001, Congress released another directive requiring the Departments of Agriculture and the Interior to engage Governors in the development of a National ten-year comprehensive strategy that would implement the NFP. As a result of this effort, the *Idaho Statewide Implementation Strategy for the National Fire Plan* (Kempthorne, et al. 2002) was developed.

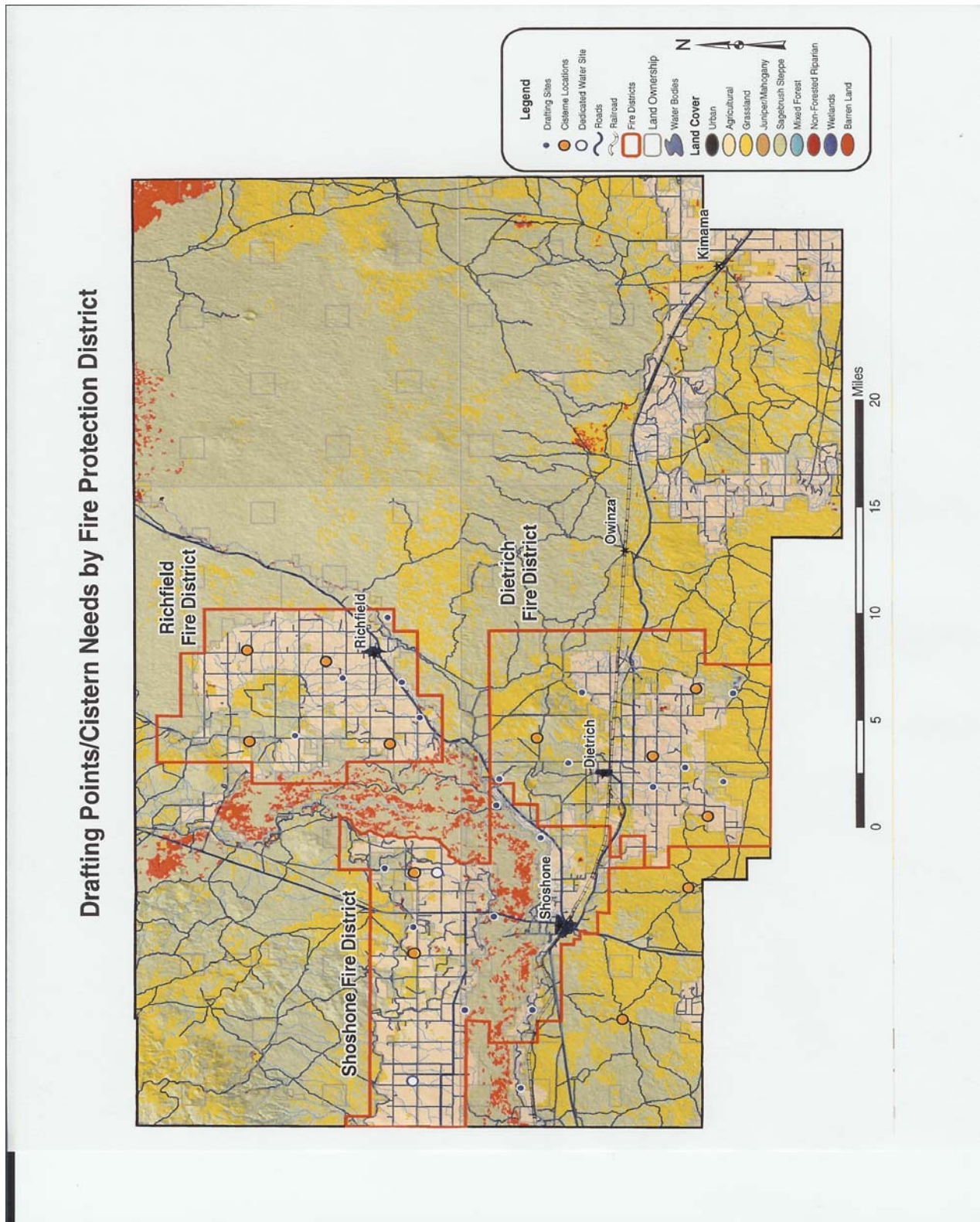
This plan was approved in May 2002 and involved the cooperation of the Secretary of Interior and Agriculture, the Governors of Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, and Oregon, and the Director of the Council on Environmental Quality. The primary goals and objectives of the Idaho Plan are to improve prevention and suppression of wildfire, reduce hazardous fuels, restore fire-adapted ecosystems, and enhance community assistance.

The Lincoln County Wildland Fire Mitigation Plan will be developed in compliance with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requirement for Local Mitigation Plans. Local mitigation plans serve as guidelines for decision makers in committing resources to reduce the effects of natural hazards. Therefore, the Lincoln County Fire Mitigation Plan will help represent Lincoln County’s commitment to reduce risks from natural hazards.

The goal of the Lincoln County Fire Mitigation Plan (LC FMP) is to reduce the risk of fire in Lincoln County.

The objectives of the LC FMP are to identify the existing fire conditions throughout the county and to recommend actions to mitigate fire threats in the specific areas of (1) public education and prevention, (2) infrastructure and fire fighting capacity and (3) fuel reduction.

Figure 1 Major open areas without fire protection/drafting points/cistern needs



With a recommendation for hazardous fuels reduction, a reduction in frequency and intensity of wildfire spreading from city or private property to public lands and a reduction in wildfires spreading from public lands to city and private property would be realized.

2.0 Description of Area:

Lincoln County is located in Southern Idaho in the northern portion of the Magic Valley with its county seat at Shoshone. It encompasses 771,000 acres in a rural type setting with the majority of populations centered around three (3) small communities; 1) Dietrich, 2) Richfield and the county seat at 3) Shoshone. Lincoln County is Idaho's sixteenth (16) largest county (land mass) in Idaho, with most lands divided among three (3) major landowners (Table 1). The county is relatively flat with some rolling hills and numerous escarpments associated with historical lava flows. Approximately 299,400 acres of Lincoln County are considered barren from historic volcanic activity.

Each of the three (3) primary communities within Lincoln County (Dietrich, Richfield and Shoshone) contain a tax base supported fire department and fire protection district (Figure 1). Early settlements such as Marley and Burmah and various labor camps, established along the UPRR, are no longer in existence or represent a very small community or cluster of homes.

2.1 Land status:

Lincoln County contains approximately 771,000 acres divided among three (3) major landowners. (Table 1) Figure 1 displays Lincoln County land ownership and the three (3) fire protection districts. All state and federal lands located within Lincoln County are protected through Mutual Aid Agreement with respective FPD.

Table 1. Land Status of Lincoln County, Idaho

Owner	Acres	Percent
State of Idaho	22,251	2.9
Private	164,100	21.3
BLM	582,912	75.83
*Other	2,321	0.3

*Idaho Department Fish and Game, Bureau of Reclamation,
Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, County, Municipal

2.2 Population:

Presently, Lincoln County is experiencing a development boom, fueled by the increased demand for goods and services in Blaine County. Affordable housing costs in Lincoln County are attracting new homeowners who commute to the job market in the north. Each of the three (3) communities within Lincoln County has experienced an increase in subdivision development and new housing starts, as have the unincorporated portions of the county. Lincoln County has grown by 2.176% over the past three (3) years.